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ABSTRACT

State directors of career and technical education (CTE) were asked about CTE's connection to workforce and economic development in their states. The CTE coordination rating scale that served as the basis of the national survey focused on the extent of coordination in the following areas: CTE's framework; CTE governance, CTE programs, CTE business partners, and CTE funding. The majority of state directors gave a rating of 3 (on a 4-point scale) to CTE's relationship to workforce and economic development within their state. Other findings were as follows: (1) coordination between CTE and general secondary and postsecondary education is generally good; (2) in 37 states, state departments of education bore responsibility for administering CTE and Perkins funds; (3) in most states, secondary CTE was administered by state boards of education whereas postsecondary CTE was more likely to be administered by state departments of labor; (4) tech prep and dual enrollment were the two most common ways of ensuring seamless transitions between secondary and postsecondary CTE; and (5) CTE business partners varied depending on individual states' needs and prevalent industries. (The CTE coordination rating scale is appended, along with lists of the state agencies other than state departments of education that receive Perkins funds and administer CTE in specific states.) (MN)

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CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION: A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

RESULTS FROM A NASDCTEc SURVEY OF THE STATE DIRECTORS

SEPTEMBER 2002

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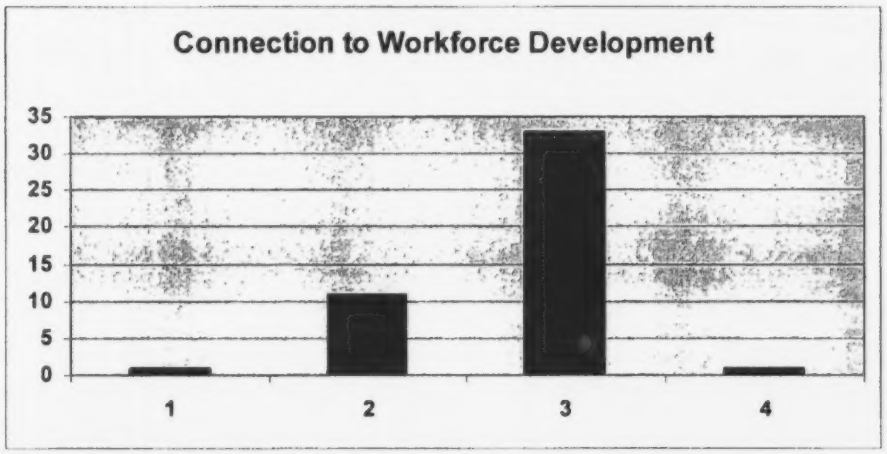
CTE FRAMEWORK

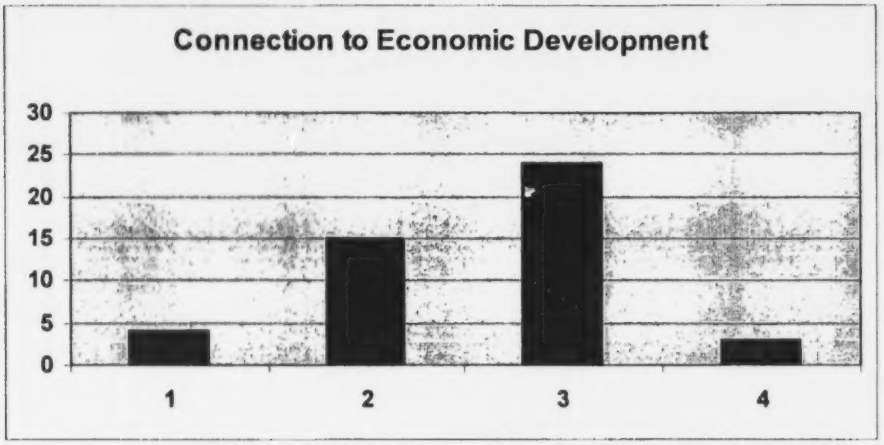
Career Technical Education:
In Partnership with Workforce and Economic Development

Part of what makes career technical education (CTE) unique is the blend of education with the workplace. By nature, CTE is an essential partner with workforce development and economic development because CTE provides students with the skills they need to succeed in the workplace. Employers often relocate to areas with strong career technical education programs which furthers the economic development in a region.

Given the strong natural tie between CTE and workforce and economic development it is no surprise that the State Directors of CTE are collaborating with workforce and economic development agencies in their states to ensure that the needs of the workplace are being met.

In the survey distributed to the State Directors, they each were asked to characterize CTE's connection to workforce and economic development in their states based on a provided CTE Coordination Rating Scale (Appendix A). As seen in the charts below the majority of the State Directors characterized CTE's relation to workforce and economic development in their state as a "3" which translates to significant coordination, such as formal interaction between staff, a joint oversight board, substantial pooling of funds, and/or aligned strategic goals.

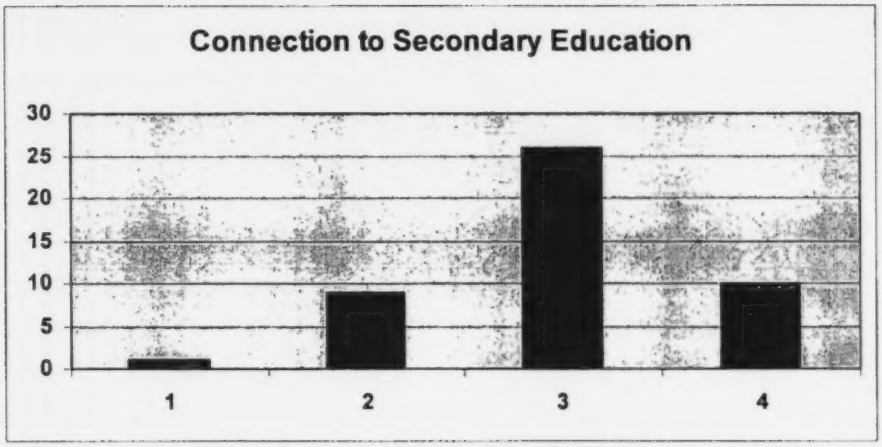




Career Technical Education:
In Partnership with Secondary and Postsecondary Education

Strong partnerships with the larger secondary and postsecondary education communities are essential for successful CTE. All students require a solid foundation provided by general education. CTE can play a powerful role in ensuring that students receive that foundation through the use of applied academics. CTE students are more likely to be engaged and stay in school to receive that necessary foundation. It makes sense that when asked how they would characterize their relationship with the general secondary education community in their states that the State Directors would indicate that significant coordination exists (a score of a three) or even rating the CTE-secondary education as a four which means that CTE and secondary education are fully integrated with no real way to distinguish the two.

A similar situation presents itself in postsecondary education. Community colleges are an essential part of the CTE delivery system. In fact, not only does CTE play a vital role in the postsecondary education system it also provides a critical connection between secondary and postsecondary education. The CTE community has been a leader in recognizing that a continuum of education is the best way to ensure that all students receive the education that they need to succeed. As a result, the State Directors responses were similar when asked about their connection to postsecondary education to their responses about the secondary education connection.


Connection to Secondary Education
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3
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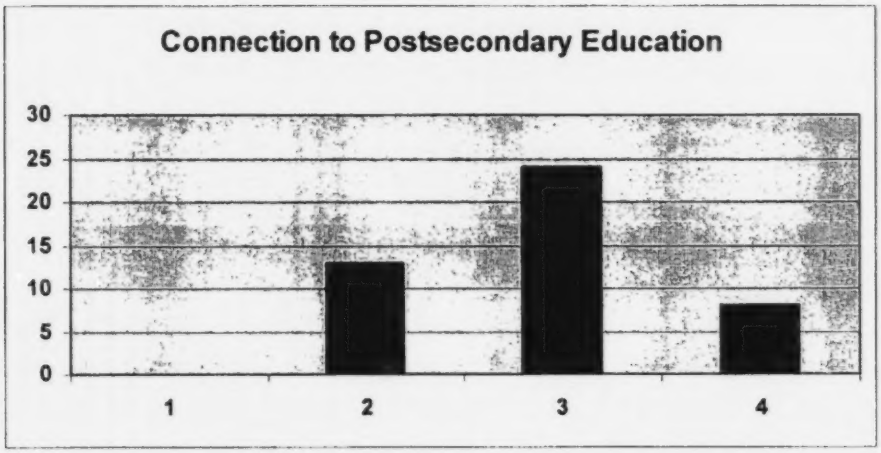
Connection to Postsecondary Education
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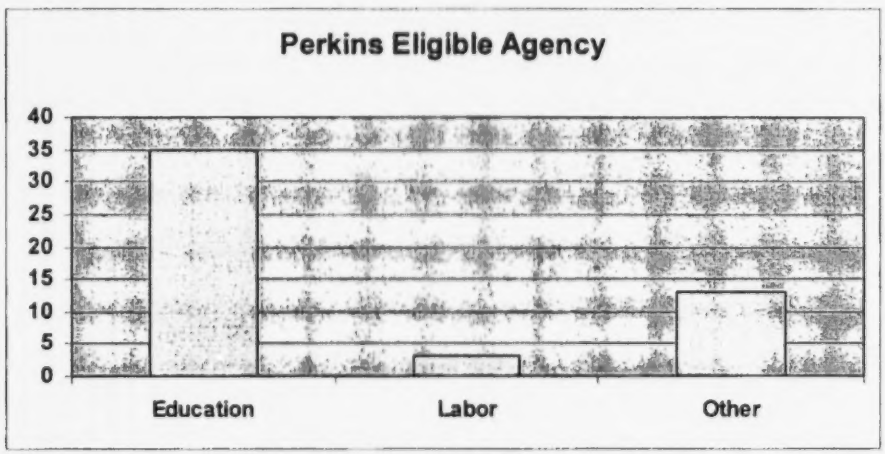
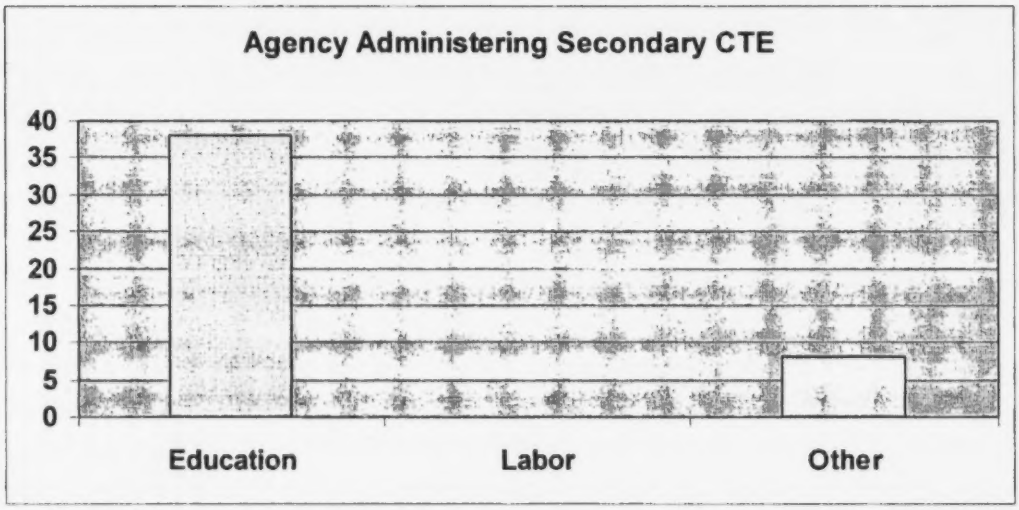
CTE GOVERNANCE

In part because of CTE's natural connections to workforce development, economic development, and the secondary and postsecondary education communities, the CTE governance system can be intricate. In many states, the agency that receives the Perkins funds may or may not be the agency that administers CTE. In some cases, several agencies share responsibility for administration of CTE. This diversity of CTE governance can make it difficult for someone outside the system to know what the CTE governance looks like from state to state; therefore, the charts below provide a snapshot of what agencies administer CTE funding and programs.

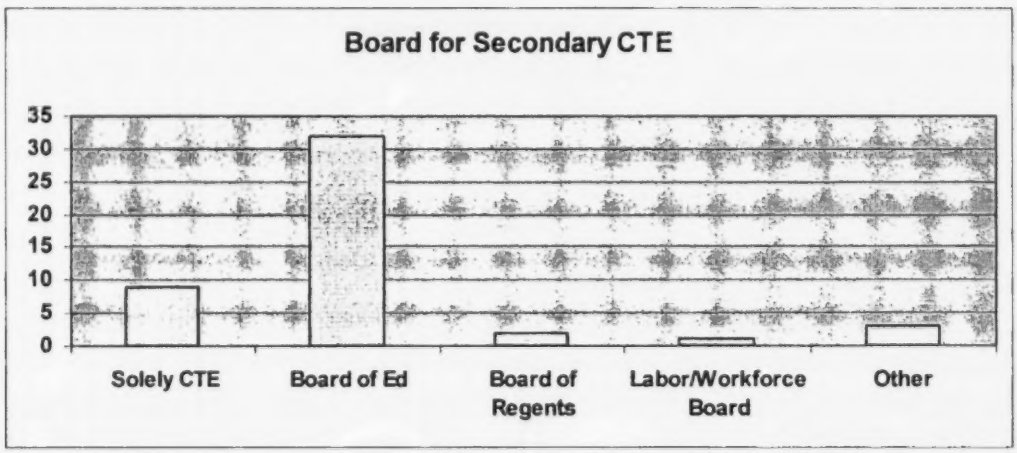
In the majority of states, the agency receiving the Perkins funds is the Department of Education (as seen in the chart below). In some states, the state government structure has designated a separate agency solely for CTE administration which accounts for the some of the "other" responses. (See Appendix B for an exact list of agencies in the "other" category.)



Similar to the Perkins eligible agency, in most states the agency responsible for administration and program development is the Department of Education. Also similar to the chart above concerning Perkins administration, some states have designated a separate agency for CTE which accounts for the "other" responses in the chart below concerning secondary CTE administration. (See Appendix C for an exact list of agencies in the "other" category.)



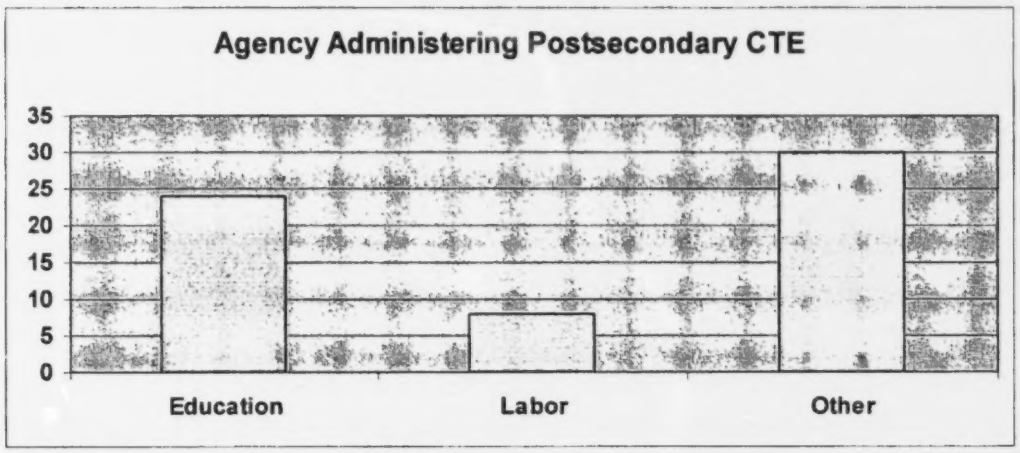
Also, at the secondary level, the State Board of Education in the majority of states has the responsibility for the oversight of CTE programs. In some states, a separate Board devoted solely to CTE exists, but this tends to be the exception rather than the rule.

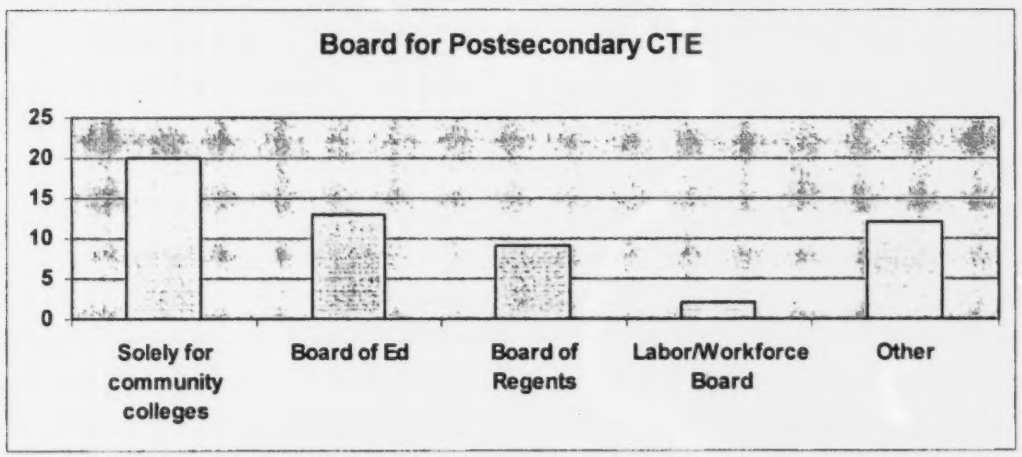


On the postsecondary side, states are more likely to designate the Department of Labor as the entity responsible for the administration of CTE. This is a direct acknowledgement of CTE's vital contribution to workforce and economic development. In addition, many states have created a community college office that oversees postsecondary CTE instead of the Department of Education which accounts for many of the "other" responses.

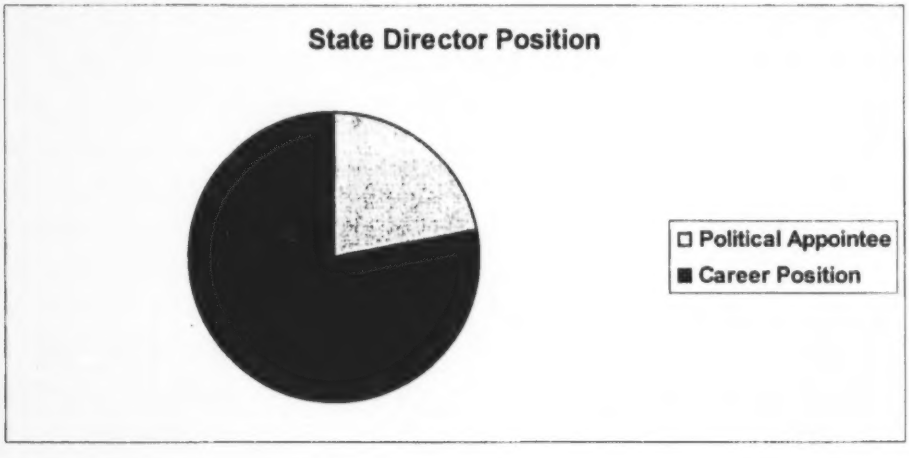
Different from the secondary system, many states have a designated board responsible for oversight of community colleges that is distinct from the rest of the higher education community. If a community college board exists in a state, it then becomes the natural oversight body for postsecondary CTE.

One interesting trend in postsecondary CTE oversight and administration is that several states share responsibility among more than one agency or board. This may be an acknowledgement of CTE's role in workforce development and as a part of the education community; therefore, it is necessary to formally involve individuals from a number of agencies in the postsecondary CTE planning and implementation process. (In cases where states have designated more than one agency, both responses are included in the charts below.)





Regardless of the agency that administers CTE, the State Director position is a vital one for ensuring that CTE meets the needs of the state. The majority of the State Directors are career state government employees who started their careers as CTE teachers and then transitioned to become a state administrator. However, in almost a quarter of the states the State Director is a political appointee who may have come from some sector of industry rather than having been an educator. This diverse mix enables State Directors in different states to come together and learn from each others' different perspectives that they have brought to their position.



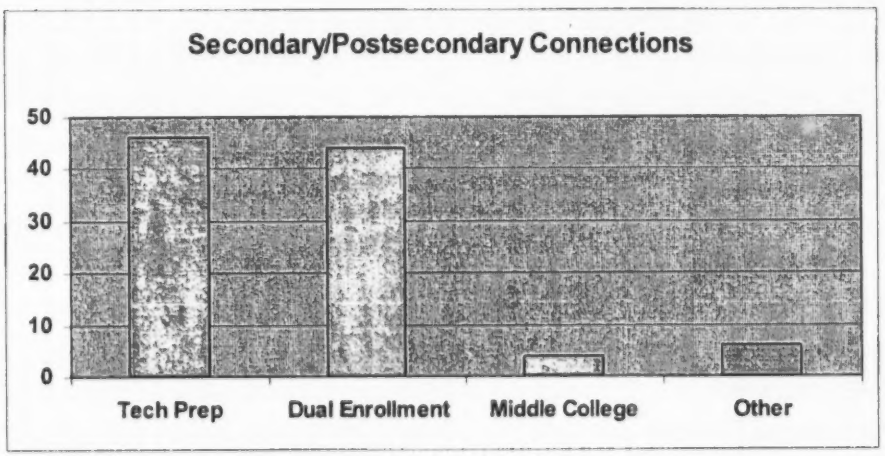
The size of the staff devoted to CTE varies significantly from state to state. The smallest staff reported is 3.25 and the largest is 389.25. In some states, the State Director only is responsible for administering CTE and in others the State Director has a larger set of responsibilities which accounts for the different employee counts highlighted below. The significant difference (34.6 and 49.4) between the average number of employees devoted to CTE and the average number of employees reporting to the State Director shows that many of the State Directors are responsible for the administration of CTE in conjunction with other programs.

The median number of employees devoted to CTE and the State Director is useful to see that the majority of the states have smaller staffs than the average numbers.

Average number of employees devoted to CTE:	34.6
Median number of employees devoted to CTE:	20
Average number of employees reporting to State Director:	49.4
Median number of employees reporting to the State Director:	27.5

CTE PROGRAMS

One of the benefits that CTE provides to students is the opportunity for a continuum of learning. Several programs have been implemented that allow students to begin their program of study at the secondary level and then make a seamless transition to the postsecondary level and take their education to the next level in preparing them for careers. The most common of these programs is Tech Prep, followed closely by some type of dual enrollment program.



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CTE BUSINESS PARTNERS

Career technical education is a natural partner with business and industry by helping students to be prepared for their careers. Business and industry also are natural partners with CTE. CTE educators and the State Directors are in a better position to prepare students when they have the help and input from business and industry leaders in their states.

CTE business partners vary depending upon the state needs and the prevalent industries in each state. From the survey of the State Directors, several types of business partners emerged as the most common across the country. They are partnerships with:

- Information technology companies
- Transportation, distribution and logistics companies
- Health care companies and hospitals
- Manufacturing companies
- Agriculture and food production companies

For the most part these partnerships mirror trends in the economy. Information technology has been the fastest growing occupation and the fastest changing occupation. With the constant change in technology, educators need leaders in information technology to provide their input on the coming trends in the field. Companies like Cisco have worked very hard to partner with educators and make sure that the appropriate curriculum is available in the classroom so that students graduate prepared to take positions in the IT field.

Business partners can range from very large companies, like Cisco, that have established partnerships nationwide to small local companies that partner just in their area. For example, in North Carolina, McGee Brothers Masonry helps educators with their masonry programs. Each of the business partners (of which there are too many to enumerate here) contribute to ensure that high quality CTE is available to students in their communities.

CTE FUNDING

Funding for CTE at the Federal, state and local levels generally has been stable over recent years. This is both an asset and a challenge. As an asset, it shows the continued commitment at all levels to ensuring that students have access to high quality CTE curriculum at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

However, it also represents a significant challenge. More students are enrolling in schools, employers are clamoring for individuals with better skills, and in the high tech era it is becoming more expensive to provide high quality CTE instruction. All of these competing needs in the face of stable funding dollars means that those dollars need to be stretched. The same is true at the Federal level; CTE has seen small increases in Federal funding over the years, but these increases have not kept pace with inflation. According to a recent report from the National Center for Education Statistics, Federal funding for CTE has realized a 19 percent decrease in real dollars over the last decade.[1] In states where state and local funding is decreasing, those challenges are even more severe.

Another strength and challenge when it comes to looking at CTE funding is the fact that education largely is the responsibility of local governments. As a result, in some states it is difficult to get a clear cut picture of how much funding, particularly at the local level, is earmarked for CTE because local school districts may not be required to report their local funds to the state agency. This is seen in the charts below where several states indicated "not applicable" for local funding.

At the state level, some states (particularly rural ones) have very small budgets to work with and the only funding that they receive for CTE comes from the Federal government. In these instances, the State Directors also indicated "not applicable" for state funding. For these states the Federal investment in CTE is the only significant investment in CTE and without those funds, the states would not be able to provide CTE to their students.

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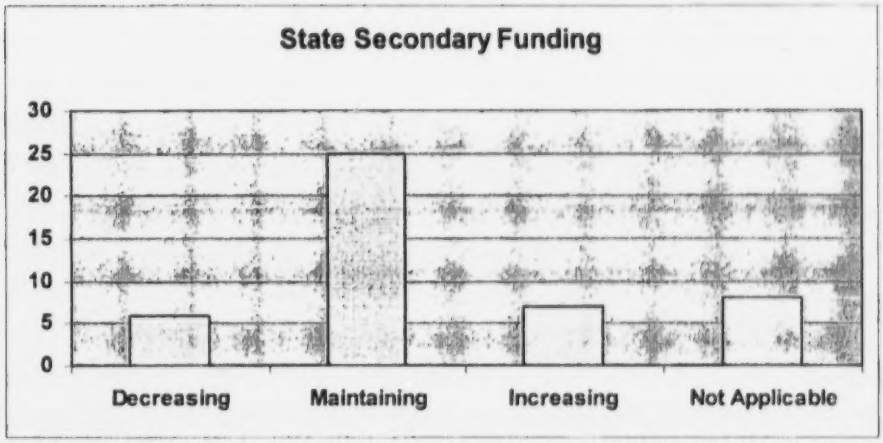
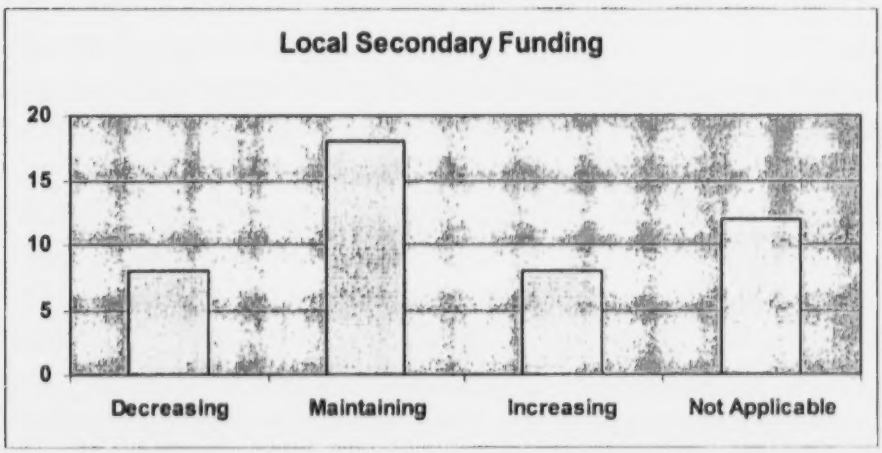
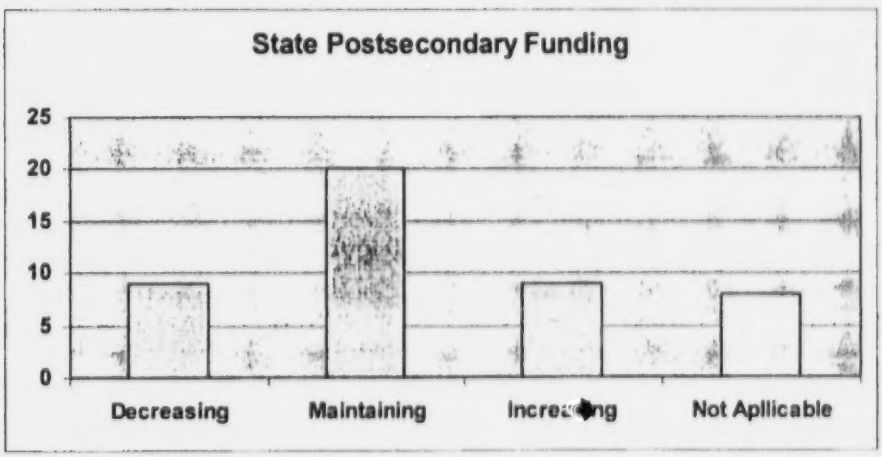
[1] "Federal Support for Education: Fiscal Years 1980 to 2000." National Center for Education Statistics. September 2000. NCES Publication ID: NCES 2000068.







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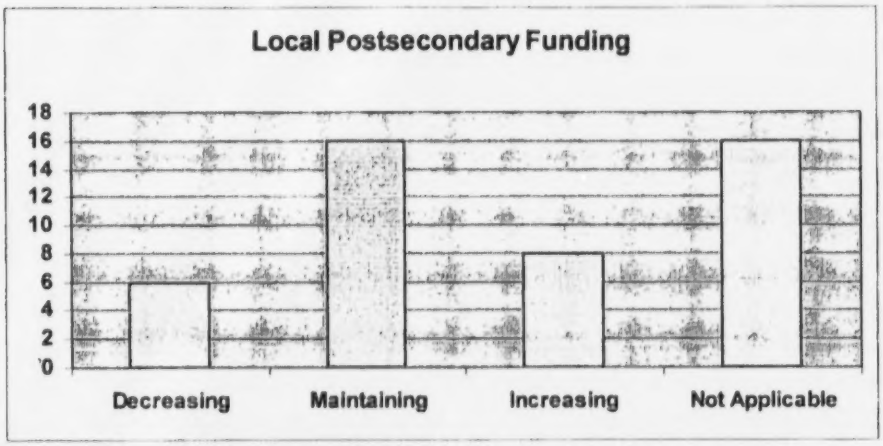
Local Postsecondary Funding
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
Decreasing
Maintaining
Increasing
Not Applicable

APPENDIX A

CTE Coordination Rating Scale

1. Little or no coordination—CTE is completely separate has no input in the other agency/ program (nor does the other agency have input into CTE), funding silos, little or no formal or informal staff interaction.

2. Minimal or low level coordination—This can be characterized as informal staff interaction or some funding crossover, but no oversight or formal input.

3. Moderate or significant coordination—This can be characterized by formal interaction between staff, a joint oversight board, substantial pooling of funds or crossover funding, aligned strategic goals.

4. Fully integrated—CTE has direct oversight for, controls the program funds, no real way to distinguish the two.

APPENDIX B

Several states chose the "other" category when asked what the designated agency is for receiving Perkins funds. Below is a list of the specific agencies that states indicated instead of the state Department of Education:

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

Idaho State Board for Professional-Technical Education

Indiana Department of Workforce Development

Hawaii University Board of Regents/ State Board for Career and Technical Education

Kentucky Department of Technical Education

Louisiana Community and Technical College System

Michigan Department of Career Development

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

Montana Board of Regents/ Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education

North Dakota State Board for Vocational Technical Education

Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education

Washington Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

Wisconsin Technical College System

APPENDIX C

Several states chose the "other" category when asked what agency administers CTE. Below is a list of the specific agencies that states indicated instead of the state Department of Education:

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

Idaho State Board of Professional-Technical Education

Kentucky Department of Technical Education

Michigan Department of Career Development

Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning

Montana Office of Public Instruction

North Dakota State Board for Vocational Technical Education

Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education

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